

*To the Chairman and Members of the Brentford Urban District
Council.
Annual Report, 1899.*

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Annual Report upon the health and sanitary condition of the Brentford Urban Sanitary District for the year 1899.

POPULATION.—Basing my calculation upon the census of 1891, I estimate the population of Brentford for the middle of the year 1899 at 15,142, and the population of the several ecclesiastical districts, into which it is divided, is St. George's with St. James', 5147, St. Paul's, 7978, and New Brentford, 2017.

BIRTHS.—The number of births has been 497, of which 246 were males and 251 females. The birth rate is 32.8 per thousand, which is 2.1 lower than last year, and 3.1 lower than the average of the previous 10 years. In fact, except 1894, it is the lowest birth rate for many years.

DEATHS.—The number of deaths during the year has been 297, of which 150 were males and 147 females. In St. George's 96, St. Paul's 156 and New Brentford 45, and the death rates respectively of these three districts is, St. George's, 18.6, St. Paul's 19.5 and New Brentford, 22.3. This last year showing, as it usually does the highest rate of mortality. The death rate of the whole district is 19.6 per thousand which is 1.2 lower than last year, but is still too high, being 1.5 higher than the average of the previous 10 years. As usual the highest mortality was in the summer months when there were over 100 deaths, and nearly 50 per cent of these were caused by Diarrhœa in young children. There was also a heavy mortality in March and December, due principally to diseases of the respiratory organs.

The principal causes of death have been—

Diarrhœa	53
Bronchitis, Pneumonia, Pleurisy	52
Phthisis	31
Heart Disease	22

There have been 33 Inquests held which is far in excess of the number held in any previous year and 13 more than last year. Death resulted from accident in 6 of these cases, 2 from burns, 1 from Tetanus, 1 from Hernia, 5 from diseases of the lungs, 5 from heart disease. 2 from apoplexy, 2 from not receiving proper attention at birth, 1 from malnutrition, 7 from drowning, and 1 from hanging. 5 deaths were returned as not certified, 3 of which were infants.

The following tables epitomises the ages at which the deaths occurred—

Deaths under 1 year	93	} 126 under 5 years old
„ from 1 to under 5 years	33	
„ „ 5 „ 15 „	11	} 171 over 5 years old
„ „ 15 „ 25 „	10	
„ „ 25 „ 65 „	95	
„ over 65 years	55	

5 of these deaths occurred in persons between 80 and 90 years old, and 5 between the ages of 90 and 100 years.

The next table shows the distribution of the mortality in the three districts of the town during the last 10 years.

	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	Average for 10 years.
St. George's ...	19.8	18.5	22.1	16.2	16.1	17.7	21.3	17.8	23.2	18.6	19.1
St. Paul's	18.1	17.2	20.3	18.9	14.4	15	16.9	13.7	18	19.5	17.2
New Brentford	22.5	22.2	21.3	22.8	17.5	17.1	21.1	17.2	20.7	22.3	20.4

INFANT MORTALITY.—The rate of this mortality on the proportion of deaths under one year of age to every 1,000 births is 187.1. This means that about 1 child of every 5 born in the town died before it was a year old, and one third of the whole of the deaths during the year, occurred in infants under this age. Last year the proportion was much higher, but it is now, and always has been, far in excess of what it should be. This year, as in most previous years, diarrhœa during the summer months caused a large proportion of deaths. Until parents can be taught from childhood the value of cleanliness, ventilation and wholesome food, I am afraid there will be always the same sad tale to record.

The following table gives the rate and average infant mortality for the last 10 years.

1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	Average for 10 years
152.3	178.1	197.1	184.8	162.4	154.5	184.9	144	223.7	187.1	176.8

The following are the deaths from the 8 principal zymotic diseases.

SMALL POX.—Again there has been no case of this disease, and it is many years since there was a death from it. Vaccination, when properly performed, is a certain preventative, and I would urge upon all its vital importance, for what parent would wickedly expose his offspring to so terrible and fatal a disease when it could be prevented by such simple means.

MEASLES.—This disease which is usually so prevalent and fatal has, I am happy to say, caused only 3 deaths, all in children under 5 years old.

SCARLET FEVER.—There have been 3 deaths from this disease, 1 an adult, and 2 children, all at their own homes.

DIPHTHERIA AND MEMBRANEOUS CROUP.—The former disease caused 2 deaths, 1 in January and 1 in February, both in children.

TYPHUS FEVER.—There have been no deaths from this disease.

WHOOPING COUGH — Last year I had to record a heavy mortality from this disease. This year I am happy to say that there have been only 4 deaths from it, but I notice that 2 of these deaths were complicated by disease of the lungs

TYPHOID FEVER.—Again this year and for several past years there have been only 2 deaths from typhoid or enteric fever, and it speaks volumes in praise of the drainage of the town, and the care which the Council take in all Sanitary matters, that this insidious disease should have nearly disappeared from our midst,

DIARRHŒA.—During the months of July, August and the early part of September a violent epidemic of diarrhœa was experienced. It commenced at the east end of the

town, and travelled westward, causing many deaths all in children. Altogether 53 deaths, 51 of which were in children under 5 years old, died from this disease during the year. The number of deaths from these 8 diseases has been 67, and the zymotic death rate is 4.4 per thousand, which is about the same as last year, but 1 higher than the average of the last 10 years.

The following table shows the number of births and deaths and the various birth and death rates for the last ten years—

	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1895	1896	1897	1898	1899	Average for 10 years
Number of births	512	494	492	503	474	537	492	576	523	497	510
Birth rate per 1000 ...	38.7	35.9	35.2	35.5	31.1	37.1	33.6	38.9	34.9	32.8	35.3
Deaths from all causes	256	253	294	263	221	235	278	231	312	297	264
Death rate per 1000...	19.3	18.3	21	18.6	15.4	16.2	18.9	15.6	20.8	19.6	18.3
Deaths from Small Pox	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
„ Measles	5	1	19	13	11	0	30	0	6	3	8.8
„ Scarlet Fever	13	5	2	7	1	0	2	1	1	3	3.5
„ Diphtheria ...	5	3	2	2	3	3	6	3	4	2	3.3
„ Typhus Fever	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.2
„ Whooping Cough	7	14	4	4	6	4	12	2	26	4	8.3
„ Typhoid Fever	5	0	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
„ Diarrhœa	21	14	18	30	11	15	16	29	29	53	23.6
„ 8 chief zymotic diseases...	56	37	46	58	34	25	68	38	68	67	49.7
Death rate of zymotic diseases..	4.2	2.6	3.4	4.1	2.3	1.7	4.6	2.5	4.5	4.4	3.4

BAKEHOUSES AND SLAUGHTERHOUSES.—These, as in former years, have been regularly inspected. Great care has been taken in keeping them clean and they are generally in good repair.

LODGING HOUSES.—Constant visits have been made to the various common lodging houses of the town, and I am happy to record that there has again been no case of infectious disease in any of them during the year.

OTHER SANITARY WORK.—This year, like all its predecessors, has been marked by the steady progress which has been made in improving the dwellings of the poor. Overcrowding where found has been checked and great care has been taken to make their houses as sanitary as possible and that there should be a good supply of water. There is a class of persons however with which it seems impossible to deal, a class which cannot be made to understand that personal cleanliness and fresh air are essential to good health, and it is from this class that we get our high infant mortality and our long list of preventible disease.

PREVENTION OF PHTHISIS.—In the previous paragraph I referred to some of the causes which produced our high mortality. Phthisis, as we now know, is an infectious disease, and therefore preventible. This year it has caused 31 deaths—24 adults and 7 under 5 years old—the same as last year. I cannot do better than repeat the advice I gave last year. As it is the expectoration which is infectious, let it be destroyed, either by using rags and burning them or by spitting into a vessel containing disinfectant. Above all let there be free ventilation in the room night and day, and let the patient sleep alone.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.—This valuable institution is still as popular as ever with all classes. Nearly all the cases of scarlet fever which occur in the town are sent to it and a large proportion this year of enteric fever cases were admitted. This has entailed a heavy amount of work on the nursing staff, and the occasional

services of an extra trained nurse have been required. Nurse Ward still continues to show the same energy and skill, and it is largely due to her efforts that the Hospital keeps so popular. She is ably assisted by her daughter as Assistant Nurse, who, now her training is finished is capable of undertaking any kind of nursing.

I have again to tender my best thanks to the head masters and mistresses of the various schools for the help they have given me in detecting and tracing infectious disease.

Number of cases during the year 1899—

Scarlet Fever ...	...	...	23
Enteric Fever ...	..	...	10
Patients under treatment December 31, 1898	...		5
„ discharged cured	...	...	33
„ died	...	...	2 (enteric)
„ under treatment, Dec. 31st, 1899	...		3

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (NOTIFICATION) ACT.—Under this act I have received 91 certificates, viz.—

<i>Scarlet Fever</i>	<i>Enteric Fever</i>	<i>Diphtheria</i>	<i>Erysipelas</i>
34	15	10	32

This year has been a decided improvement on 1898, but it still leaves much to be desired. The births are again less this year, indeed they are not so numerous as they were ten years ago. If the reason of this is that poor men decide not to marry until they are in a position to keep a decent home it would be a matter of congratulation, but I am afraid this is not the case. The death rate although lower than last year is still higher than any year since 1892. The Infant Mortality is enormously above the average. As long as this high rate continues progress is impossible. It seems of little use appealing to the grown men and women, they appear quite satisfied and even happy with their condition. Can we, by teaching the young to be ashamed of uncleanly habits, hope to effect a change in the next generation.

I cannot close this report without referring to the good work which has been done by the nurses of the Cottage Hospital. Many serious cases of illness have been successfully treated in the Hospital, and the nurses have visited a great number in their own homes. If a patient is well nursed his chances of recovery are greatly increased, and the Hospital Nurses have brought this to the homes of the poorest. As the Cottage Hospital is entirely supported by voluntary contributions, I sincerely hope that funds will always be forthcoming to enable it to continue its career of usefulness.

Mr. Abbott, the Sanitary Inspector, has supplied me with the following particulars

Summary of Nuisances dealt with during the year 1899.

TABLE I.

Number of houses and premises visited, including 420 house to house						
inspections	...	...	...	...	...	1785
„ visits to Courts and Alleys	...	...	...	...	...	30
„ special complaints received and attended to	...	...	...	...	...	62
„ reinspections after service of notice	...	...	...	...	...	380
„ nuisances discovered	...	...	...	...	...	920
„ nuisances outstanding Dec. 31, 1898	...	...	...	...	...	20
„ nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	...	838

Number of nuisances outstanding Dec. 31st, 1899	...	...	...	30
„ preliminary notices issued	...	...	...	189
„ statutory „ „	...	...	...	223
„ letters written	...	...	...	241
„ summonses taken out	...	...	...	4
„ convictions or orders obtained	...	...	...	4

All the summonses taken out were for the non-compliance with the nuisance notices served.

TABLE II.

Description of Nuisances dealt with.

Accumulation of offensive matter, etc.	...	...	...	...	38
Animals etc. kept so as to be a nuisance	...	...	..	...	7
Cisterns in houses cleansed, repaired, covered, etc.	...	...	...	...	86
Overflow pipes disconnected from drains	...	...	...	...	3
Drains examined, tested, etc.	...	...	...	...	58
„ uustopped, trapped, and repaired	...	...	...	...	116
„ disconnecting traps inserted	...	...	...	...	3
„ reconstructed	...	...	...	...	6
Dustbins provided	...	...	..	...	69
„ repaired, etc	...	...	...	...	36
Dampness, roofs repaired	...	...	...	...	88
„ gutters and down spouts repaired	...	...	...	...	106
„ yards &c. repaired	...	...	...	...	19
Houses supplied with water	...	...	...	..	5
„ cleansed and repaired	...	...	...	...	231
„ overcrowding	...	...	...	...	18
„ closed, unfit for habitation	...	...	...	...	7
Water closets, new, provided	...	...	...	...	10
„ repaired	...	...	...	...	85
„ new apparatus provided	...	...	...	...	27
„ supplied with water	...	...	...	...	199
Unsound food, seizure of meat	...	...	..	...	1
„ grapes	...	...	...	...	1
„ peas	..	...	...	...	1

THE COMMON LODGING HOUSES within the district have been regularly visited by day, and night inspections have been made. The periodical cleansing and limewashing of the premises has been attended to, and during the inspections the houses were generally found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

Number of houses on register	...	...	...	...	7
„ lodgers registered for	...	...	...	...	92
„ visits by day 40, by night 7	...	...	...	...	47

DAIRIES, MILKSHOPS, &c.—

Number of premises registered January 1st, 1899	...	...	...	26
„ applications to register	...	...	...	5
„ inspections made	...	...	...	Frequent

BAKEHOUSES, SLAUGHTERHOUSES, &c.—During the year 23 Bakehouses within the district have been frequently visited, and the periodical cleansing of the walls and ceilings attended to.

The slaughterhouses (8 in number) have also been periodically inspected and found to be complying with the byelaws.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS, SCHOOLS, &c.—The Factories, Workshops, Schools, Laundries, &c. have received attention during the year, and found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE—

Number of cases inspected on occurrence of infectious disease	...	...	82
„ infectious disease notifications	...	...	91
„ houses disinfected	...	...	75
„ „ stripped and cleansed	...	...	23
„ of articles of clothing, bedding, etc., disinfected in steam disinfecting	...	...	215
„ patients removed to Isolation Hospital	...	...	33

CANAL BOATS ACTS, 1877 & 1884.—On the 1st of January, 1899, 253 Canal Boats were on the register at Brentford, and during the year 8 applications have been received to register Canal Boats as dwellings. Of these 1 was a new barge and 7 were registered on account of change of ownership, and as such complied with the requirements of the Acts and Regulations, the applications were granted.

220 inspections have been made at uncertain times, and during the inspections the occupants of the boats were at all times ready to afford every facility for inspection, and the cabins kept in a clean and satisfactory condition.

The number of contraventions of the Acts and Regulations met with during the inspections has been 41. Complaint notes have been forwarded to the owners in 14 cases, and verbal cautions have been given in the remaining 47 instances.

The following is a list of contraventions met with.

Absence of certificate	...	...	...	...	23
Certificate not identifying	...	...	...	...	4
Not properly marked	...	...	...	...	9
Separation of sexes	...	...	...	...	1
Cabins requiring painting	...	...	...	...	10
No proper water vessel	...	...	...	...	4
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	3
Change of master	...	...	...	...	7

During the year there have been no cases of infectious disease on board the boats.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

BRENTFORD,

March 27th, 1900

HENRY BOTT,

Medical Officer of Health.